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ABSTRACT

In a study of the relative importance native speakers of French attach to different types of errors produced by second language learners, 231 native French speakers listened to 50 pairs of deviant sentences to determine which sentence in each pair contained a more serious error. The sentences contained 20 different types of errors grouped into five categories, four pertaining to grammatical features (verb errors, confusion of forms, omission, and wrong word order) and one with vocabulary-related items. Results in these error categories were compared, and it was found that inappropriate vocabulary, verb errors, and incorrect word order were considered more serious than omissions and confusion between forms belonging to the same grammatical class. Substitution of "etre" for "avoir" was considered more serious than other verb errors. Confusion of "a" and "pour" prepositions was considered more serious than other preposition confusions and more serious than pronoun confusion or masculine-feminine determiner confusion. Omission of reflexive pronouns and determiners was considered more serious than omission of prepositions and direct pronouns. Misplacement of negative particles was considered the most serious error of word order, with misplacement of object pronouns following. Results also suggest that socioeconomic class and educational background may influence native speaker judgment. The appendix provides the 50 pairs of deviant sentences. (MSE)

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NATIVE SPEAKER REACTIONS TO ERRORS MADE BY FRENCH IMMERSION STUDENTS

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Résumé

Le but de cette étude était d'examiner l'importance que les locuteurs natifs attachent à différents genres d'erreurs commises par des étudiants de langue seconde.

A cette fin, on a présenté oralement cinquante paires de phrases à 231 locuteurs francophones. L'ensemble des phrases contenait vingt genres d'erreurs groupés selon cinq catégories. Quatre de ces catégories étaient composées d'erreurs grammaticales et la cinquième portait sur des erreurs de vocabulaire.

Les résultats indiquent que les erreurs de vocabulaire et les erreurs portant sur l'ordre des mots dans une phrase étaient jugées comme étant plus graves que des erreurs d'omission ou de confusion de formes. Les résultats suggèrent aussi que le niveau socio-économique et l'expérience éducative pourraient influencer le jugement des locuteurs natifs.

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to investigate the relative importance native speakers attach to different types of errors produced by second language learners.

Two hundred thirty-one native French speakers were asked to listen to fifty pairs of deviant sentences and to determine which sentence in each pair contained a more serious error. The sentences comprised twenty different types of errors grouped into five categories. Four categories pertained to grammatical features and one contained vocabulary-related items.

The results indicate that inappropriate vocabulary, verb errors and incorrect word order were considered more serious than omissions and confusion between forms belonging to the same grammatical class. The study also suggests that socio-economic class and educational background may influence the judgement of native speakers.

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Over the past decade, French immersion programs in Canada have come to be viewed as an effective means for native English Canadians to become functionally bilingual within a school setting[1]. The immersion model stresses the development of communicative competence by making the target language the medium of instruction rather than a subject to be taught. The rationale underlying this approach is that such a context closely resembles natural language learning environments and that the intensive use of the target language will enable the learner to develop native-like proficiency in that language.

The French immersion programs have been carefully monitored since their inception and comparative evaluations with native French-speaking peers reveal that the performance of immersion students reaches native-like levels in comprehension but not in production (for some relevant research findings see: Genesee, 1979a; Adiv and Morcos, 1979; Adiv, 1980a). A number of studies have also provided more detailed analyses of the linguistic output produced by immersion students. The results of these studies show that immersion students continue to make numerous grammatical and lexical errors even after a number of years in the program (Spilka, 1976; Hamayan, 1978; Adiv, 1980b & c). These findings suggest that the intensive use of the target language does not in itself ensure

the development of native-like proficiency in second language production. They also lend support to the hypothesis put forth by Selinker, Swain and Dumas (1975) that the absence of native peer models may lead to the development of a pidgin dialect in the immersion classroom. From a pedagogical perspective, the research findings raise the issue as to whether greater emphasis should be put on error correction in immersion classes.

Background

Error correction has always been a central issue for the second language teacher. Throughout the 1950s and 1960s errors were viewed as blemishes which had to be eradicated as soon as they occurred (see, for instance, Politzer, 1961). During the past fifteen years, new directions in psycholinguistics and especially the view that deviant forms are a natural and necessary part of language development, have lead to a greater tolerance towards errors in second language production. Today, educators advocate a more selective approach to error correction and stress the how and when in dealing with errors (Hendrickson, 1978). Corder (1978), in particular, has suggested that remedial procedures be based on the relative frequency of an error and on its severity. The question is how is severity to be determined?

There seems to be growing consensus that errors which interfere with the conveyance of the message should receive priority (see, for example, Burt and Kiparsky, 1972; Powell, 1975; Hanzeli, 1976; Chastain, 1981). Often, however, students manage to communicate quite efficiently, albeit with many mistakes. It has been pointed out that such speech

patterns could stigmatize the learner when he or she comes into contact with native speakers (Richards, 1973; Valdman, 1975; 1980). This issue has prompted a number of studies pertaining to the reactions of native speakers towards the deviant utterances produced by second language learners (Politzer, 1978; Gunterman, 1978; Galloway, 1980; Piazza, 1980; Tardif and d'Anglejan, 1981; Chastain, 1981; Delisle, 1982).

The studies by Piazza (1980) and by Tardif and d'Anglejan (1981) are particularly relevant here as they examine native speakers' reactions to errors produced in French. Piazza distinguished between comprehensibility and irritation. She noted that the more comprehensible an error the less irritating it was. She found that errors in the form of the verb and errors in pronoun usage were the least comprehensible and the most irritating. Her study also indicates that misplacement of object pronouns was rated as less comprehensible and more irritating than misplacement of an adjective or an adverb. Tardif and d'Anglejan found a high correlation between native speaker judgements on four variables: comprehensibility, grammaticality, acceptability and irritation. In ranking the various error categories, these researchers also noted that native speakers reacted more negatively to the misplacement of an object pronoun than to the misplacement of an adjective. Moreover, in both studies, gender errors were considered less serious than word order errors. Interestingly, neither Piazza nor Tardif and d'Anglejan included vocabulary errors in their sentence samples. Yet Politzer's (1978) and Delisle's (1982) studies showed that native speakers often judged vocabulary errors in German a more serious error than various types of grammatical errors.

The purpose of the present study was to use Politzer's (1978) methodology in order to examine the importance native French speakers attach to different types of vocabulary and grammatical errors made by French immersion students.

Method

Test Instrument

The first step in the development of the test instrument was the identification of those errors which are most common in the verbal production of immersion students. For this purpose, the written compositions of forty-five grade 10 students from early and late immersion programs were examined. Both grammatical and vocabulary errors were considered. Errors due to homophonous forms were, however, excluded from the selection. Twenty different types of errors were thus identified. The twenty types were grouped into five main categories. The first four of these categories pertained to grammatical features and the fifth to vocabulary-related items[2]. A full listing of the different categories and types of errors is given in Table 1.

Each type of error was represented by five different sentences. Whenever possible, sentences actually produced by immersion students were used. Errors other than the relevant one were eliminated from those sentences. Where the data of the immersion students did not provide sufficient examples, appropriate sentences were made up by the researcher. One hundred sentences were collected in all. Each sentence in a given category was then

paired with a sentence from a contrasting category. A listing of the fifty sentence pairs according to their order of presentation is given in the appendix. The sentence pairs were arranged so as to ensure that the different error types in each category were compared to all the error types in the four other categories. Ten contrasting category groupings were thus formed.

The fifty sentence pairs were recorded by a native-English male speaker. The speaker, a former immersion student, spoke French fluently but with a very slight English accent.

Subjects

Five groups of native French speakers living in Montreal participated in the study: two groups of high school students, one group of "CEGEP" students[3] and two groups of adults (for exact sample sizes see Table 2).

The high school students came from two different types of schools. One group studied in a purely academic high school (hereafter HS group) and the other studied in a high school which also offers vocational education (hereafter VOC group). The two groups belonged to different socio-economic class backgrounds. The students in the HS group came from mainly middle class homes, whereas the students in the VOC group came from predominatly lower-middle class homes. All the subjects in these two groups were grade 10 students.

The students in the CEGEP group were selected from two parallel classes in the same institution and all of them were in their second year of studies. These students belonged to predominantly middle socio-economic

class homes.

The subjects in the two adult groups had again different educational and socio-economic class backgrounds. One group was a group of university students (hereafter UA group) and the other group was a group of working class adults attending high school level evening classes (hereafter NUA group). The UA group consisted of two sub-groups, one was a third year B.A. group and the other an MA group. None of these students had taken linguistics or a related subject as part of their university courses.

Procedure

The fifty pairs of sentences were presented to all five groups. After each pair of sentences, there was a five second pause during which the subjects marked their answer on an answer sheet. The subjects were told beforehand that all the sentences contained errors and that their task was to indicate which of the two sentences in a pair was the most deviant one. They were also told that such judgements reflected personal perceptions and that there were no right or wrong answers.

Results

Major Findings

The results of the investigation are summarized in Tables 3 and 4. Table 3 lists the number of times a deviant sentence pertaning to a given error category was judged to be more serious than the sentence to which it was compared. The table also indicates the total number of times that

sentence could have been chosen as the "worse" one and the resulting percentage. The five categories are ranked on the table in descending order from highest to lowest percentage. The rank order thus established indicates that vocabulary-related errors were considered most frequently as the more serious error (55%). This category was, however, closely followed by errors in word order (Category D) and errors in the verb (Category A) each of which amounted to 54% of the total number of times deviant sentences pertaining to these error categories had been judged by the native speakers. On the other hand, omissions (Category C) and confusion of forms (Category B) were viewed as less serious and constituted 43% and 42% respectively of the total number of times errors in these categories had been judged.

The finding that vocabulary-related errors were most frequently viewed as "worse" is consistent with Politzer's (1978) results. However, this type of error was considered relatively more serious in Politzer's study (77%) than in the present one (55%). On the other hand, the results for verb errors and errors in word order were practically the same in the two studies (Politzer's study shows 55% and 54% respectively and this study indicates 54% in each case). One possible reason for the difference between the two studies in the relative seriousness of vocabulary-related errors may lie in the choice of the lexical items themselves. Delisle (1982), in analyzing the various items tested by Politzer more in detail, showed that vocabulary errors were judged to be more serious than the errors to which they were contrasted when the inappropriately used expression was either difficult to interpret or when it constituted an easily recognizable contradiction to the everyday use of that expression. It is

possible that there were fewer vocabulary-related errors that satisfied these conditions here than in Politzer's study. Moreover, a native speaker's ability to interpret deviant vocabulary may be influenced by the linguistic milieu in which he or she lives. People in a bilingual community like Montreal, where the two languages are in constant contact, may be more likely to recognize the intended meaning of unexisting or inappropriately used forms than people who live in a mainly monolingual milieu.

The Relative Severity of Errors

Let us now consider the native speakers' judgements on the ten contrasting categories in some detail. The results of this part of the study are summarized in Table 4. The first column to the left in this table (under the heading "item") refers to the identification number of the sentence pair on the tape. The second column indicates the percentage of native speakers who considered an error in the first category of the contrasting pair (e.g."A" in the comparison of category A to category B) to be more serious than the error in the second category. In order to determine whether one of the sentences in a contrasting pair was chosen significantly more often than the other one, a X^2 analysis was performed on the raw scores obtained for each sentence pair. The results of this analysis are indicated in the third column to the left. The results of the judgements according to population subgroups are shown in the remaining columns of Table 4 together with the results of the X^2 analyses performed to see if the differences between the subgroups were significant.

The results pertaining to the judgements of the total population

show that in all but six cases, there was a significant difference in the number of times one category was chosen in preference to the contrasting one. These findings suggest considerable agreement among the native speakers with regard to the relative severity of an error.

Closer inspection of the results reveals, however, a great amount of inconsistency within practically all of the ten contrasting category groupings. In other words, within each grouping, some types of errors in a given category were considered to be worse than the errors in the contrasting category while others were judged to be less serious than those in that same contrasting category. These findings seem to support Delisle's (1982) claim that the ranking of errors according to such broad categories does not reflect the relative importance of each type of error. Moreover, even within a given error type, the ratings of individual errors were not always uniform. These inconsistencies will be pointed out below.

Category A (verb errors) compared to Category B (confusion of forms). Category A errors were considered worse than Category B errors in four of the five contrasting pairs (Items 1,21,31 and 41). In three of these pairs the difference in choices was statistically significant. The only time a verb error was considered less serious than a Category B error was when the former pertained to the incorrect use of avoir in conjunction with the verb tomber (to fall), e.g., *j'ai tombé (I fell). This result can probably be attributed to the fact that such forms are sometimes produced in colloquial Canadian

French (Mougeon and Carroll, 1976). Interestingly, there was almost total agreement (95%) on Item 1 which pertained to the substitution of être for avoir in the expression *être peur (to be afraid).

Category A (verb errors) compared to Category C (omissions). Here no clear pattern emerged. Verb errors were considered worse than omissions when the latter pertained to the omission of a preposition or an object pronoun (Items 5 and 15). On the other hand, verb errors were judged to be less serious than the omission of a determiner or a reflexive pronoun (Items 25, 35 and 45). The contradictory results for Item 15 (68% in favor of the verb error) and Item 25 (36% in favor of the verb error) are particularly noteworthy since both verb errors relate to the regularization of irregular past participles (*prené for pris [taken] in the case of Item 15 and *voulé for voulu [wanted] in the case of Item 25)[4]. It is possible that *voulé was judged to be a less serious error because it is structurally and phonetically much closer to the correct form voulu than *prené is to pris.

Category A (verb errors) compared to Category D (wrong word order). Category A errors were considered to be worse than Category D errors in four of the five cases (Items 8, 18, 28 and 38), although in the case of Item 38, the number of times A was chosen over D was marginal. The confusion between avoir and être in the passé composé (Item 8) constituted the worst type of error (92%). This is in sharp contrast to the findings noted above with regard to *j'ai tombé. The percentage is also considerably higher than that noted for Item 5 (70%) where a similar error occurred (*Pierre a retourné, Pierre came back). It must be noted, however, that on Item 8 the

error involved the substitution of être for avoir and not visa versa(*je suis rencontré un ami, I met a friend). Since the majority of French verbs are conjugated with the auxiliary avoir in the passé composé, the subjects' reactions may indicate that errors which contravene a prevailing pattern are less acceptable than errors which reflect the regularization of irregular forms.

The findings pertaining to the Category D errors are also noteworthy. Both in Item 48 where the verb error was considered less serious than the word order error (30%) and in Item 38 where the choice of A over D was marginal (52%), the word order error pertained to the misplacement of an adjectif, whereas in the other three cases the error pertained to the misplacement of an adverb, a pronoun and a negative particle.

Category A (verb errors) compared to Category E (vocabulary-related errors). In this grouping the pattern is reversed. Category A errors were perceived as less serious than Category E errors in four of the five comparisons (Items 20, 30, 40 and 50) although for Items 40 and 50 the difference is statistically not significant. The only time a verb error was considered more serious than the vocabulary-related error to which it was compared was when the verb error involved, once again, the confusion between avoir and être used as main verbs (Item 10, *Quand j'étais dix-sept ans..., when I was seventeen...).

Category B (confusion of forms) compared to Category C (omissions). For this set of comparisons, the results indicate that Category B errors were clearly perceived as less serious than Category C errors (Items 2, 12,

22, 32 and 42). However, in the case of the incorrect substitution of le (him, direct object pronoun) for lui (him, indirect object pronoun) the difference in choices between Category B and Category C was only marginal (Item 2).

Category B (confusion of forms) compared to Category D (word order). There is considerable variability here. In Items 36 and 46 where the Category B error consisted of the substitution of mon (my, masculine) for ma (my, feminine) and of the substitution of pour (for) for à (to), these errors were considered worse than a word order error. On the other hand, when the Category B error pertained to a wrong pronoun form, e.g., the substitution of lui (him, indirect object pronoun) for le (him, direct object pronoun) or a gender error in the definite article, such errors were judged to be less serious than word order errors (Items 6 and 26). Finally, in the case of Item 16 which pertained to the confusion between qu'ils (that they) and qui (who), the difference in the number of choices between B and D was marginal.

Since this lack of uniformity could also be influenced by the different types of word order errors, let us briefly consider the latter. In Items 6 and 16, the error consisted of the misplacement of a negative particle; in Items 26 and 36 the error consisted of the misplacement of an object pronoun and in Item 46 the adjective was misplaced. It would seem that there is less tolerance for the misplacement of negative particles than for the misplacement of an adjective and no clear pattern emerges so

far for errors pertaining to misplaced object pronouns.

Category B (confusion of forms) compared to Category E (vocabulary). Here Category B errors were considered less serious except in on case, Item 39, where the error consisted, once again, of the confusion between à (to) and pour (for).

Category C (omission) compared to Category D (word order). The results of this set of comparisons show that in four of the five cases omissions were judged to be a less serious type of error than word order errors. The only omission error which was considered worse than a word order error was the omission of a reflexive pronoun (Item 43). Interestingly, the word order on Item 43 error pertained once again to the misplacement of an adjective whereas in the four cases where word order constituted the more serious error, the incorrect form pertained to the misplacement of a negative particle (Items 3, 13 and 23) and of an object pronoun (Item 33).

Category C (omission) compared to Category E (vocabulary). As in the other instances where grammatical errors were compared to vocabulary-related errors, the comparison between Category C and Category E errors indicates that the latter type of error was generally considered the more serious one (Items 7, 17, 27 and 47). The only case where this pattern was not upheld was in Item 37 where the omission of a reflexive pronoun was perceived as more serious than the vocabulary error to which it was compared.

Category D (word order) compared to Category E (vocabulary). No clear pattern emerges here. Category D errors were considered worse than category E errors in three instances. In two cases (Items 14 and 24) the word order error pertained to the misplacement of the negative particle pas and in the third case (Item 34) it involved the misplacement of the pronoun lui (him). On the other hand, word order errors were considered less serious than vocabulary-related errors when they pertained to the misplacement of an adverb or an adjective (Items 4 and 44).

Differences Among Groups

The results of the statistical analyses relevant to this part of the research show that in eighteen of the fifty comparisons, there were significant differences among the groups. Closer inspection of the data reveals that in eight of these comparisons (Items 1, 5, 25, 45, 12, 6, 16 and 26 on Table 4) the judgements of the VOC group differed noticeably from those of the HS, CEGEP and UA groups. Moreover, on five of these items (1, 5, 25, 45 and 16), the judgements of the NUA group also differed markedly from those of the HS, CEGEP and UA groups. It is possible that school experience and socio-economic background play a certain role in a person's perceptions of grammaticality and in his or her acceptance of deviant utterances. It should also be noted that, in two additional instances (Items 29 and 17), the judgements of the NUA group contrasted sharply with those of the UA group. Both of these cases pertained to comparisons in which vocabulary-related items were considered more serious than gram-

matical errors. Politzer (1978) noted a similar difference between the judgements of 13 year old students enrolled in a "general" secondary school and those of students enrolled in the more academically oriented "gymnasium". In the present study, on the other hand, the instances in which the judgements of the younger VOC students differed strongly from the general patterns did not involve vocabulary items. It is possible that the VOC students, all of whom were studying English as a second language, were better equipped than the NUA group to interprete some of the false cognates and word for word translations from English to French.

Summary of Findings and Conclusion

The major patterns that emerged from this study can be summarized as follows:

(1) For the five categories of errors the following hierarchy was established going in descending order from most serious to least serious: (i) Category E (vocabulary-related errors), (ii) Categories A and D (verb and word order errors), (iii) Category C (omissions) and (iv) Category B (confusion of forms within the same grammatical class).

(2) Within Category A, the substitution of être for avoir was considered more serious than other types of verb errors.

(3) Within Category B, the confusion between à and pour was considered more serious than the confusion between other prepositions. It was also considered more serious than the confusion between different pronouns and the confusion between masculine and feminine determiners.

(4) Within Category C, the omission of reflexive pronouns and the omission of determiners were considered more serious types of errors than the omission of prepositions and the omission of object pronouns.

(5) Within Category D, the misplacement of negative particles was considered the most serious type of error and the misplacement of object pronouns was considered more serious than the misplacement of adjectives or adverbs.

(6) The judgements of the VOC and NUA groups differed noticeably from those of the HS, CEGEP and UA groups on certain items.

In interpreting the above summary, it must be borne in mind that the rank order of the five categories is based on comparative judgements between errors in contrasting categories. Moreover, within a given category, the "more serious" errors tended to be judged as being worse than errors in all the other categories. Thus, for instance, the misplacement of negative particles was not only considered a worse error by comparison to errors in lower ranking categories such as omissions, but also by comparison to higher ranking categories such as the vocabulary-related one. It is possible that this is due to a certain overlap between categories. It could for instance be asked whether some of the word for word translations could not be interpreted as syntactic rather than vocabulary-related errors. On the other hand, the reactions to some of the grammatical errors could be semantically motivated. A case in point is the reaction to the gender error in Item 36 where a masculine determiner was used in front on a noun referring to a feminine person (*mon soeur, my sister). In a similar vein, expressions such as <u>avoir peur</u> (to be afraid) may be perceived as indivisible semantic units, hence the highly negative reaction to the sub-

stitution of être for avoir here.

These notions suggest that acceptability judgements may be influenced, to some extent, by the context in which the deviant forms are embedded. Future research should investigate this issue by varying the contexts in which a given error would appear.

In conclusion, this study has provided information in several areas. The hierarchical ranking of the categories has shown certain similarities between French and German with regard to perceptions of error severity. The study has also shown that native speakers' judgements may, in certain cases, be influenced by socio-economic background and educational experience. Again, similar results were noted by Politzer (1978) with reference to German native speakers. These findings may have important implications with respect to the uniformity of native speakers' intuitions about their language and future studies should address this issue. It might be instructive, for example, to look at an adult population with a wider range of socio-economic and professional backgrounds.

When the findings of this study are compared to those of other studies related to French error evaluation, certain similarities can be noted in the judgements pertaining to the severity of word order errors by comparison to gender errors (Piazza, 1980; Tardif and d'Anglejan, 1981). On the other hand, word order errors were considered less important than verb errors in Piazza's study but not in the present one. This may be due to the importance accorded to the misplacement of negative particles in the present study, a type of error that was not investigated by Piazza. It is also interesting to note that the use of inappropriate object pronoun forms was judged much more

severely in Piazza's study than in this one. One may speculate as to whether French Canadians show greater tolerance towards this kind of error.

The study has also practical implications for second language teaching. Here the analysis of the native speakers' reactions to specific kinds of errors may be more useful than the hierarchical ranking of the error categories. The information derived from this analysis may not only help the teacher to establish priorities in error correction, but may also serve to determine which areas of grammar instruction should receive greater emphasis. For instance, at the time when object pronouns are taught, special learning activities may be devised to stress the pre-verbal position of these pronouns. Moreover, the teacher may decide to coordinate error correction with the teaching of specific grammatical features. In other words, during the time a given structure is taught, the teacher would concentrate on the correction of errors pertaining to that particular structure. Such an approach implies that the reactions of native speakers to deviant utterances may influence the sequence in which certain grammatical structures are introduced in the classroom. The present study can, however, only provide limited guidelines in that direction and further research is needed to make the findings of this study more generalizable and to broaden the range of errors under investigation.

Notes

1. The present study relates specifically to the learning of French in the early and late immersion programs offered by the Protestant School Board of Greater Montreal.

2. The vocabulary-related errors included not only word coinages and false cognates, but also word-for-word translations of entire phrases which required different expressions in the two languages, e.g., *si ça n'avait pas été pour lui... (if it hadn't been for him).

3. CEGEPS (collèges d'enseignement général et professionel) offer two types of programs: an academic program and a vocational program. All the CEGEP students in this study attended an academic program.

4. Conventional spelling is used throughout this paper for the transcription of data. The arbitrary spelling of unexisting grammatical forms follows the spelling of the corresponding regular forms.

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Table 1

Summary of Error Types

Category A: Errors in the verb

(1) Confusion between avoir and être
(2) Wrong tense in simple sentence
(3) Lack of tense coordination
(4) Regularization of irregular forms

Category B: Confusion of forms within the same grammatical class

(1) Confusion between direct and indirect object pronouns
(2) Confusion between different relative pronouns
(3) Gender errors in the determiner
(4) Wrong choice of preposition

Category C: Omissions

(1) Omission of an object pronoun
(2) Omission of a reflexive pronoun
(3) Omission of a determiner
(4) Omission of a preposition

Category D: Wrong word order

(1) Misplacement of an object pronoun
(2) Misplacement of a negative particle
(3) Misplacement of an adjective
(4) Misplacement of an adverb

Category E: Vocabulary-related errors

(1) Word coinage
(2) Extension of semantic range
(3) Word used in inappropriate context
(4) Word for word translation of an expression

Table 2

Sample Sizes According to Group

High school students (HS group)	52
Vocational school students (VOC group)	22
CEGEP group (CEG group)	44
University students (UA group)	68
Evening class students (NUA group)	45

Table 3

Number and Percentage of "Worse Error" Choices per Category

Category	Type of Error	# of Choices	# of Possible Choices[a]	%
E	Vocabulary related	2518	4542	55
D	Incorrect Word order	2439	4496	54
A	Verb errors	2420	4480	54
C	Omissions	1949	4483	43
B	Confusion of form	1961	4503	42

[a]The total number of possible cases varies slightly across categories because not all subjects responded to all items.

Table 4

Percentages of "Worse Error" Choices for each Contrasting Pair by Total Group and by Subgroups[a].

Item	Total	X^2	HS	VOC	CEG	UA	NUA	X^2
Category A vs. Category B								
1	95	92.57***	100	87	100	98	90	14.38*
11	17	49.75***	17	13	24	12	21	3.15
21	59	3.77	57	72	46	60	59	5.85
31	65	10.84***	57	63	53	90	62	18.31**
41	86	58.52***	91	94	74	84	85	8.15
Category A vs. Category C								
5	70	18.40***	83	57	82	71	56	14.22**
15	68	14.58***	74	62	58	67	79	5.50
25	36	7.63**	28	40	29	31	58	10.49*
35	37	7.51**	28	33	37	41	50	5.16
45	22	35.84***	13	37	21	14	26	10.47*
Category A vs. Category D								
8	92	80.58***	91	93	89	96	92	1.66
18	70	18.08***	77	60	74	73	65	4.80
28	60	4.28*	58	61	61	56	64	0.67
38	52	0.27	40	57	68	47	55	8.57
48	30	18.40***	15	23	34	44	34	11.62*
Category A vs. Category E								
10	77	32.14***	62	80	84	88	71	11.80*
20	35	10.84***	32	25	34	35	49	5.30
30	22	35.12***	19	21	26	14	33	5.42
40	42	3.19	37	51	47	26	51	9.32
50	43	1.97	52	48	24	29	62	16.58**

Table 4 (cont'd)

Item	Total	X^2	HS	VOC	CEG	UA	NUA	X^2
Category B vs. Category C								
2	49	0.02	51	40	42	58	54	4.18
12	38	6.04*	43	20	39	49	39	9.81*
22	38	6.51*	38	23	21	58	47	18.73***
32	35	9.47**	33	35	34	32	46	2.25
42	34	10.94***	37	40	32	24	39	3.84
Category B vs. Category D								
6	28	21.25***	17	47	29	26	24	11.81*
16	47	0.32	55	30	66	53	32	16.05**
26	31	15.91***	28	51	26	28	21	11.57*
36	70	17.60***	81	77	66	56	67	8.91
46	73	24.50***	68	74	66	90	67	9.58*
Category B vs. Category E								
9	28	21.25***	17	33	24	30	33	6.11
19	39	5.14*	42	45	29	37	42	2.74
29	34	11.47***	43	35	37	12	46	15.57**
39	85	55.23***	89	89	82	88	74	5.85
49	35	9.98**	36	39	42	33	26	2.82
Category C vs. Category D								
3	7	83.76***	4	6	11	6	10	2.30
13	23	32.83***	21	32	26	10	27	7.34
23	18	46.72***	8	24	18	16	26	6.71
33	14	58.58***	17	12	8	14	18	2.66
43	78	35.44***	77	50	71	90	69	6.77

Table 4 (cont'd)

Item	Total	X^2	HS	VOC	CEG	UA	NUA	X^2
Category C vs. Category E								
7	20	41.71***	21	11	21	20	26	5.30
17	27	23.02***	21	28	37	12	46	15.74**
27	11	70.10***	2	11	5	12	26	15.37**
37	72	21.78***	72	72	79	71	67	1.50
47	30	15.61***	38	23	29	33	33	2.59
Category D vs. Category E								
4	41	3.90*	36	40	32	44	46	4.29
14	60	4.11*	74	64	66	50	41	12.75*
24	78	34.23***	81	84	66	83	71	6.45
34	76	30.04***	83	78	79	68	71	3.84
44	25	27.75***	17	40	32	8	34	17.97

*$p < .05$

**$p < .01$

***$p < .01$

[a]The percentages indicate how often the error in the first category was considered worse than the error in the second category.

Appendix

A/B 1.a) Plus l'heure avançait, plus la jeune fille commençait à être peur.
b) Laisse-lui faire ce qu'il voudra.

B/C 2.a) Quand Jean était prêt le professeur l'a donné une copie de l'examen.
b) Il y avait un examen ce jour là et j'avais oublié étudier.

C/D 3.a) Hélène demande son ami de lui prêter ses patins.
b) Je le croise tous les jours dans la rue et il ne jamais me dit "Bonjour".

D/E 4.a) Elle toujours a une raison pour ne pas faire ses devoirs.
b) Si les gens veulent fumer, ils n'ont qu'à le faire dans le privicé de leur maison.

A/C 5.a) Hier Pierre a retourné très tard à la maison.
b) Jacques, essaye être ici à 7 heures ce soir!

B/D 6.a) Attrape-lui avant qu'il tombe.
b) A cause de la tempête de neige elle ne rien voit.

C/E 7.a) Ça serait intéressant savoir combien de gens sont d'accord avec lui.
b) La pollution peut endanger l'environnement et la vie des individus.

A/D 8.a) Je suis rencontré un ami que je n'avais pas vu depuis très longtemps.

b) Le professeur a discuté toujours du même sujet.

B/E 9.a) Je descendais de l'autobus lorsque je lui ai rencontré.

b) Je n'ai rien expériencé d'extraordinaire en fumant.

A/E 10.a) Quand j'étais 17 ans, j'ai traversé l'océan afin d'habiter à Montréal.

b) Cet homme a inhérité l'argent de sa vieille tante.

B/A 11.a) Ils étaient tous les deux d'accord lorsque je les ai parlé.

b) En courant vers l'autobus j'ai tombé dans la rue.

C/B 12.a) Dès le premier cours, il a commencé poser des questions.

b) Les gens qu'ils boivent toujours ruinent leur santé.

D/C 13.a) Ils ne pouvaient pas traiter Diane comme un petit enfant qui ne rien sait.

b) Ma mère m'a acheté cette robe parce qu'elle était belle et je voulais.

E/D 14.a) On devient facilement addicté à la cigarette.

b) A cause de son accident il n'a pu pas obtenir un permis de conduire.

C/A 15.a) Elle prend un morceau de chocolat et donne à sa soeur.

b) J'ai prené une pomme pour déjeuner et je suis parti en vitesse.

D/B 16.a) Comme il était assis au fond de la salle il pouvait ne pas voir les acteurs.

b) Les personnes qu'ils jouent aux cartes risquent de perdre leur argent.

E/C 17.a) Les cigarettes peuvent devenir un hasard pour la santé.

b) Le petit garçon avait froid et sa mère a donné un manteau.

D/A 18.a) Tout ce bruit ne m'a laissé pas finir mon travail.

b) Le film que je vais décriver est un chef-d'oeuvre.

E/B 19.a) Je vais vous raconter l'histoire de l'homme le plus fameux du monde.

b) N'importe lequel peut obtenir, au préalable, une copie de l'examen.

E/A 20.a) Elle regarde sa montre et se demande quel temps il fait.

b) Lors de son voyage en Europe, elle m'a écrivé plusieurs lettres.

A/B 21.a) Ils ont metté leurs livres sur la table.

b) Les élèves qui les professeurs a grondés sont sortis de la classe.

B/C 22.a) La fille que je t'ai parlé habite maintenant à Montréal.

b) Mon ami a beaucoup de disques tandis que moi je n'ai pas.

C/D 23.a) Paul fait ses devoirs et Marie regarde les petits enfants jouent.

b) Il ne pas pouvait mentir à Jean.

D/E 24.a) Ils ont trouvé que l'examen ne pas était difficile.

b) Hier les ouvriers ont fait la grève pendant tout le jour.

A/C 25.a) Thérèse a voulé se lever tôt mais son réveil n'a pas sonné.

b) Dans le portefeuille il y avait seulement d'argent.

B/D 26.a) Il n'y avait pas de classes pendant le tempête de neige.

b) Elle a dit à nous de ne pas la déranger.

C/E 27.a) En sortant de maison, Diane a trouvé un portefeuille.

b) Il a peur d'entreprendre quoi que ce soit parce qu'il n'a pas confidence en lui-même.

A/D 28.a) Un bon médecin penser beaucoup à ses malades.

b) Jean ne voulait pas donner à nous sa balle.

B/E 29.a) La jour de Noël toute la famille se réunit autour de l'arbre.

b) Si ça n'avait pas été pour lui, j'aurais été perdu dans la forêt.

A/E 30.a) Les enfants jouer souvent avec leurs nouveaux jouets.

b) Il m'a promis de venir à un différent temps.

B/A 31.a) Il m'a donné sa numéro de téléphone.
b) Plus les étudiants travailler, mieux sont les résultats.

C/B 32.a) J'ai passé mes vacances au bord de mer.
b) Son capacité de comprendre des problèmes est remarquable.

D/C 33.a) Depuis son arrivée, elle ne cesse de demander leur la même question.
b) Après la tempête, il y avait de neige partout.

E/D 34.a) En revenant de l'école, Jean a regardé pour son livre.
b) J'ai conseillé lui de prendre son temps.

C/A 35.a) Elle a saisi le verre pour boire d'eau fraîche.
b) Joanne court à la maison et demander de l'argent à sa mère.

D/B 36.a) L'animateur distribuera à vous des copies du document à la fin de la conférence.
b) Hier je suis allé visiter mon soeur.

E/C 37.a) La petite Nadia est tombée en deuxième place aux jeux olympiques à Moscou.
b) En regardant par la fenêtre, je suis aperçue que ma bicyclette n'était plus là.

D/A 38.a) Un garçon jeune est venu nous offrir de l'aide.
b) Jacques traverser la rue tous les jours pour se rendre à l'autobus.

E/B 39.a) Le film était sur un jeune homme pauvre mais très ambitieux.
b) Je suis allé à la police à demander si quelqu'un avait réclamé le portefeuille.

A/E 40.a) Avec cet argent je peux achète des vêtements.
b) Ils économisent afin d'être aisés dans leurs vieux ans.

A/B 41.a) Hier soir je jcue aux échecs avec mon ami.
b) La police avait commencé d'interroger la dame.

B/C 42.a) Il a appris de nager quand il avait 2 ans.
b) Ce matin là, j'ai bien pris le temps d'habiller.

C/D 43.a) Henri réveille toujours en retard le lundi.
b) Hier toute la classe a passé un difficile examen.

D/E 44.a) Il a vu un blanc fantôme dans son rêve.
b) A neuf heures il a commencé son marcher quotidien vers l'école.

A/C 45.a) Au XIXe siècle, il n'y a pas d'électricité.
b) Je suis demandé ce que je faisais là.

B/D 46.a) Mes parents se sont intéressés pour une nouvelle auto.
b) On a fait un voyage long l'été dernier.

C/E 47.a) Nous sommes beaucoup amusés chez toi samedi passé.
b) C'est en majeure part le manque de surveillance qui cause le vandalisme.

A/D 48.a) Dans l'avenir le chauffage au gaz naturel devient plus populaire.

b) Ma mère a préparé une bonne chaude soupe.

B/E 49.a) Dans le printemps, la neige fond et les arbres bourgeonnent.

b) Cette industrie fait emploi de beaucoup de travailleurs.

A/E 50.a) Paul veut demande à Sylvie de lui prêter son crayon.

b) On avait déjà conduit pour 50 milles quand l'autobus est tombé en panne.